VISIT…

STONE DEAD

A Short Adventure for Four 14th-Level Player Characters

CREDITS

Design: Stan!
Editing: Penny Williams
Typesetting: Nancy Walker
Cartography: Todd Gamble
Web Production: Julia Martin
Web Development: Mark A. Jindra
Graphic Design: Sean Glenn, Cynthia Fliege
Playtesting: Christopher Perkins, Jeff Quick, John Rateliff, Charles Ryan, Tammie Ryan

Based on the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and on the new edition of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game designed by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Rich Baker, and Peter Adkison.

D&D, DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, and DUNGEON MASTER are registered trademarks owned by Wizards of the Coast, Inc. The d20 logo is a trademark owned by Wizards of the Coast, Inc. All Wizards characters, character names, and the distinctive likenesses thereof are trademarks owned by Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

This material is protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America. Any reproduction or unauthorized use of the material or artwork contained herein is prohibited without the express written permission of Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

©2003 Wizards of the Coast, Inc. All rights reserved.
Made in the U.S.A.

This product is a work of fiction. Any similarity to actual people, organizations, places, or events is purely coincidental.
This Wizards of the Coast game product contains no Open Game Content. No portion of this work may be reproduced in any form without written permission. To learn more about the Open Gaming License and the d20 System License, please visit www.wizards.com/d20.

The Temple of Redcliff is a short D&D adventure for four 10th-level characters. Consult the Scaling the Adventure sidebar for ways to modify the scenario for higher or lower levels of play.

This scenario can be incorporated into any style of campaign. Since the adventure takes place in an abandoned temple and includes undead creatures, any party that chooses to undertake the mission should include a cleric.

Stone Dead is a short D&D adventure for four 14th-level player characters (PCs). Consult the Scaling the Adventure sidebar for ways to modify the scenario for higher or lower levels of play.

This scenario can be incorporated into any style of campaign. It is set in Respite, an isolated town along the banks of a river fed by a nearby hot spring, so it can easily be placed in a remote, forested area of any campaign world.

PREPARATION

You (the DM) need the D&D core rulebooks, including the *Player's Handbook*, the DUNGEON MASTER'S *Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*. This adventure also uses the gravecrawler, a creature from *Monster Manual II*, but all information from that book needed to run the adventure has been provided here.

You can place this adventure in any section of your campaign world that features a forested area in which an isolated town might exist. If you have a remote town that is already known as a place to seek healing, so much the better. Adapt the material given here as you see fit to make it work with your campaign.

To get started, print out this module (including the maps). The maps used here were originally presented in March 2001 as part of the Map-A-Week feature on the D&D website. They are available for you to download at <www.wizards.com/dnd/article.asp?x=dnd/mw/mw20010301x>. For the purpose of this adventure, the "sanitarium" noted on the original maps has been changed to a "sanatorium." So instead of a hospital for the mentally ill, the facility is a resort for convalescing from an illness or for maintaining or improving one's health.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Respite is a town renowned for its tranquility and isolation. This remote village gained notoriety many years ago because the waters of its hot mineral spring were said to have restorative powers. This rumor turned out to be untrue—any healing people received in Respite came from its dedicated clerics. But the combination of the divine healing and hot mineral baths nonetheless provided comfort and healing for the ill and injured, and the out-of-the-way site soon became famous far and wide as a place to convalesce, or simply to improve one's health.

Life in the town centers around a sanatorium run by clerics dedicated to Obad-Hai—the steadfastly neutral

god of nature. For a modest donation, the clerics take in travelers, let them soak in the warm spring waters, and use divine spells to heal their wounds.

Within the past few weeks, however, a terrible tragedy has befallen the town of Respite. The trouble began when a rare undead creature called a gravecrawler (see *Monster Manual II*) found its way to the town and took up residence under the graveyard. The gravecrawler really meant no harm to the residents, but the unusually high and warm groundwater forced it to remain close enough to the surface that its calcifying aura could affect those who visited the cemetery.

The clerics were mystified by the mysterious illness that seemed to be slowly calcifying some of the townsfolk. Suspecting some sort of plague, they sent word to others of their order, in hopes of finding a cause (and perhaps a cure) for the malady.

One of their messages was intercepted by Krekulphyr, a gargoyle cleric of Nerull, the dark god of death and decay. Thanks to his affinity for death and the undead, Krekulphyr correctly deduced the cause of the problem and saw an opportunity to advance his deity's agenda. After petitioning Nerull for a boon through lengthy rituals and expensive sacrifices, the gargoyle cleric was granted the ability to command a gravecrawler, even though his cleric level would not ordinarily have permitted him to do so. Upon gaining this ability, he flew to Respite, perched on top of the sanatorium, and commanded the gravecrawler to move under the inhabited sections of town.

The plague, it seemed, was spreading. Some of the townsfolk, and even a few of the clerics, packed up and fled for their lives. Others stayed, convinced that they were too healthy, tough, or just plain lucky to be struck down. They were wrong. Eventually, the entire remaining populace was turned to stone.

Krekulphyr moved into the catacombs beneath the sanatorium and built a shrine to Nerull. Then he called in the two wings of gargoyle fighters under his command, told them where to perch, and ordered them to keep an eye out for visitors. They were to kill any interlopers who attacked them or attempted to enter the sanatorium; otherwise they were not to interfere with visitors in any way, since more deaths from the calcifying aura would serve to glorify Nerull still further.

Krekulphyr then went back inside the sanatorium, fasted and prayed to Nerull for assistance, and commanded the gravecrawler to appear. With his dark god's aid, he performed a long, complex ritual to bind the creature inside a stone golem, thereby creating a symbiotic construct known as a deathstone. With the stone golem's melee prowess and the gravecrawler's calcification ability, the deathstone is exactly the instrument of destruction that Krekulphyr has been looking for, and he intends to send it forth to bring death to all the civilized lands.

KREKULPHYR

Krekulphyr has spent his entire life in the active service of Nerull, and the death god is well pleased with his

SCALING THE ADVENTURE

Stone Dead is designed for a party of four 14th-level adventurers, but it can easily be modified to present an appropriate challenge for parties of different sizes or levels. Consider adapting the adventure as follows.

Four 12th-Level PCs: Run the adventure as written, but with the following changes.

- Reduce the number of gargoyles standing guard in town by half, leaving two on the gate keep and four on the sanatorium. Maintain the same ratio of fighters to rogues for the gargoyles in the sanatorium encounter.
- Reduce Krekulphyr's cleric level to 8 and adjust his equipment accordingly. Make sure that his Fortitude save remains high enough that he does not have to worry about the deathstone's calcifying aura.
- Parties that do not have at least one +2 weapon may not be able to do any harm the deathstone. But the gargoyles have several +2 and +3 weapons, which the characters can acquire by defeating them.

Four 16th-Level PCs: Run the adventure as written, but with the following changes.

- To increase the difficulty of the gate keep and sanatorium encounters, give each gargoyle sentry an additional two levels of its chosen class and the Improved Critical feat with its chosen weapon.
- Increase Krekulphyr's cleric level to 16. Also, outfit the deathstone with magic armor of your choice and give him Combat Reflexes as a bonus feat.

cleric's efforts. Thus, when Krekulphyr sought special boons during his mission to Respite, the god was disposed to grant his requests.

Krekulphyr hates the "softskins"—his term for most humanoids—with a passion. He believes that the stony complexions of gargoyles make them not only handsomer than softskins, but also clearly superior to them.

The cleric has gathered two wings of gargoyles to serve as his holy warriors and trained them in the arts of death and trickery. Though all his minions profess loyalty to Nerull, Krekulphyr correctly surmises that they are not as dedicated to the dark god as he is, and that it is actually fear of Krekulphyr himself that keeps them in line.

Though Krekulphyr's primary goal is to advance Nerull's power in the mortal world, he is happiest when circumstances permit him to do so in an especially elegant manner. The discovery of the gravecrawler—a creature capable of both killing and calcifying the softskins—seemed the perfect way to advance his deity's agenda while making his own statement about the value of stone over soft flesh.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

The PCs arrive in Respite just after Krekulphyr has completed the deathstone. They find the town deserted except for statues of the townsfolk, but these statues are subtly different than those of creatures that have been suddenly petrified.

Eventually their explorations bring them into the sanatorium for which the town is justly famous. After defeating Krekulphyr's gargoyle troops, they face the gargoyle cleric and his deathstone in the underground shrine he has built to Nerull.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Getting the PCs to Respite should not be a particularly difficult task. This adventure can be used as an interesting diversion for PCs traveling through the region, or it can be a very personal adventure for characters who have some history with the town and people of Respite. Perhaps the characters have made use of the town's healing services before, or perhaps they have friends and relatives who have.

As DM, you know best how to involve your players and their characters in an adventure. You can use the following adventure hooks to spur your imagination, modifying them as necessary to make them appropriate for the characters' interests.

- The PCs meet a refugee from Respite—one of the townsfolk fleeing the devastation there. He tells them that some evil magic has been turning people to stone, so he packed up and left before it could happen to him.
- Rumors reach the PCs about a "stone plague" that has struck the town of Respite. It appears that people are getting sick and slowly turning to stone. Visitors used to go there regularly to partake of the town's legendary healing waters, but now no one is willing to come within miles of the place.
- The PCs meet one of the messengers sent out by the clerics of Obad-Hai. She tells them of the mysterious series of petrifications and explains that the clerics have been unable to find a cure for the condition. She also tells them about a gargoyle that mysteriously appeared on the roof of the sanatorium the morning that she left Respite.
- The PCs are en route to Respite for reasons of their own—perhaps drawn by the legends of healing waters or returning for one of their regular visits. On the way, they might hear one of the previous rumors, or they might simply arrive with no clue as to what is going on in the town.

BEGINNING THE ADVENTURE

The adventure begins as the PCs approach the town of Respite. Begin with encounter A. Thereafter, the encounters may be used in any order, depending on where the PCs decide to go.

A. APPROACH TO TOWN

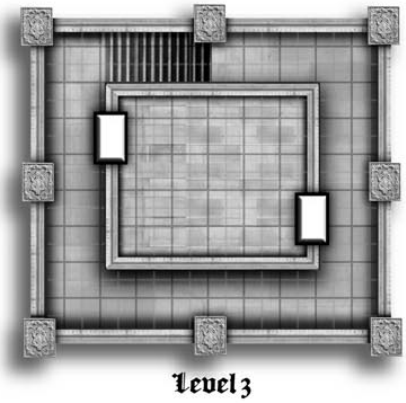
Everything looks normal as the PCs approach Respite, except for the utter lack of any activity in or around the town. Respite is, to coin a phrase, quiet as the grave.

Each PC may attempt a Listen check (DC 15) on entering Respite to notice that it is not only the human population that is quiet. No birds are chirping, no squirrels are hopping through the trees—nothing is making any sound at all except the wind rustling through the leaves. Any character who makes a successful Spot check (DC 20) also notices statues of animals placed here and there at the forest's edge, all sculpted in various natural positions. (These statues are the calcified bodies of the local fauna, though the characters have no way to determine that as yet.)

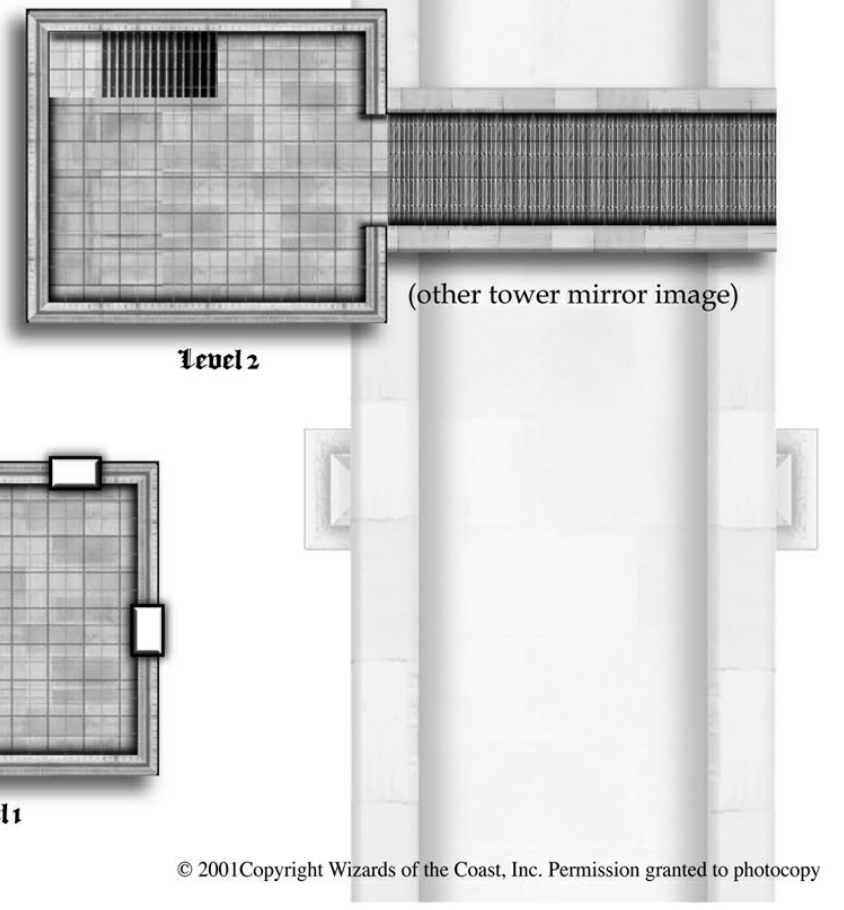
Gate Keep

One Square Equals 5 Feet

Overview Map

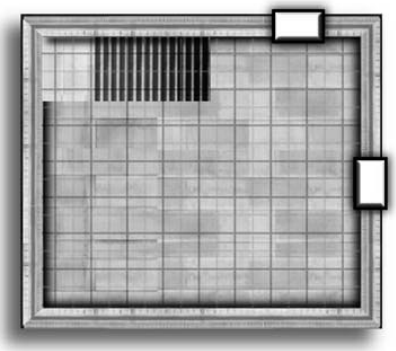


Level 3



(other tower mirror image)

Level 2



Level 1

© 2001Copyright Wizards of the Coast, Inc. Permission granted to photocopy

B. GATE KEEP (EL 14)

The road to Respite crosses the river via a small bridge and is protected by the gate keep—a pair of three-story towers that flank the town's main entrance. Usually the gate keep is manned by one or two of the town's residents, who call down to ask visitors their names and their business. Today, no one appears to be in the tower.

As the PCs near the gate keep, read or paraphrase the following aloud.

> The scent of mineral water fills the air as you approach the gate keep—a pair of stone towers that serves as a gate for the town of Respite. Each tower is three stories high, and the two are connected by a walkway across the top. Two monstrous statues perch on each tower, gazing off in different directions.

PCs who have been to Respite before know that there have never been any statues on the gate keep during their earlier visits—only citizens on guard duty.

Characters who enter the actual towers of the gate keep find them deserted. The only item that seems out of place is a statue of a young man sitting at a table on the second floor of the left-hand tower. Anyone who has visited Respite before may attempt an Intelligence check (DC 15) to realize that this statue looks just like one of the local residents.

Creatures: On the third floor of the gate keep sit four gargoyle sentries, two on each tower. They look out to the cardinal points of the compass and use their *eyes of the eagle* (see below) to watch for approaching visitors.

Gargoyle Sentries (4): Male and female gargoyle Fighter 6; CR 10; Medium-size magical beast (earth); HD 4d10+16 plus 6d10+24; hp 95; Init +2; Spd 45 ft., fly 75 ft. (average); AC 20, touch 16, flat-footed 18; Atk +13 melee (1d4+3, 2 claws) and +11 melee (1d6+1, bite) and +11 melee (1d6+1, gore), or +15/+10 melee (1d8+6/17–20, *+2 keen longsword*) and +11 melee (1d6+1, bite) and +11 melee (1d6+1, gore); SQ damage reduction 15/+1, darkvision 60 ft., freeze, low-light vision; AL CE; SV Fort +13, Ref +8, Will +3; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 18, Int 6, Wis 11, Cha 7.

Skills and Feats: Climb +5, Hide +9*, Listen +5, Spot +10; Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Flyby Attack, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Multiattack, Power Attack, Weapon Finesse (claw), Weapon Finesse (bite), Weapon Finesse (gore).

Freeze (Ex): A gargoyle sentry can hold itself so still it appears to be a statue. An observer must succeed on a Spot check (DC 20) to notice the gargoyle is really alive.

Skills: *A gargoyle receives a +8 racial bonus on Hide checks when concealed against a background of worked stone.

Possessions: *+2 keen longsword, belt of giant strength +4, ring of protection +4, eyes of the eagle, bead of force.*

Tactics: These gargoyles have orders to stand motionless and watch visitors' actions, but not to attack except in self-defense or to prevent anyone from entering the sanatorium. If the characters attack the gargoyles and the fight lasts for more than 4 rounds, one of the sentries flies off to the sanatorium to alert the sentries there that hostile intruders are in town.

In combat, two of the gargoyle sentries engage the PCs in melee combat using their swords, while the other two make flyby attacks or attempt to bull rush the PCs off the platform.

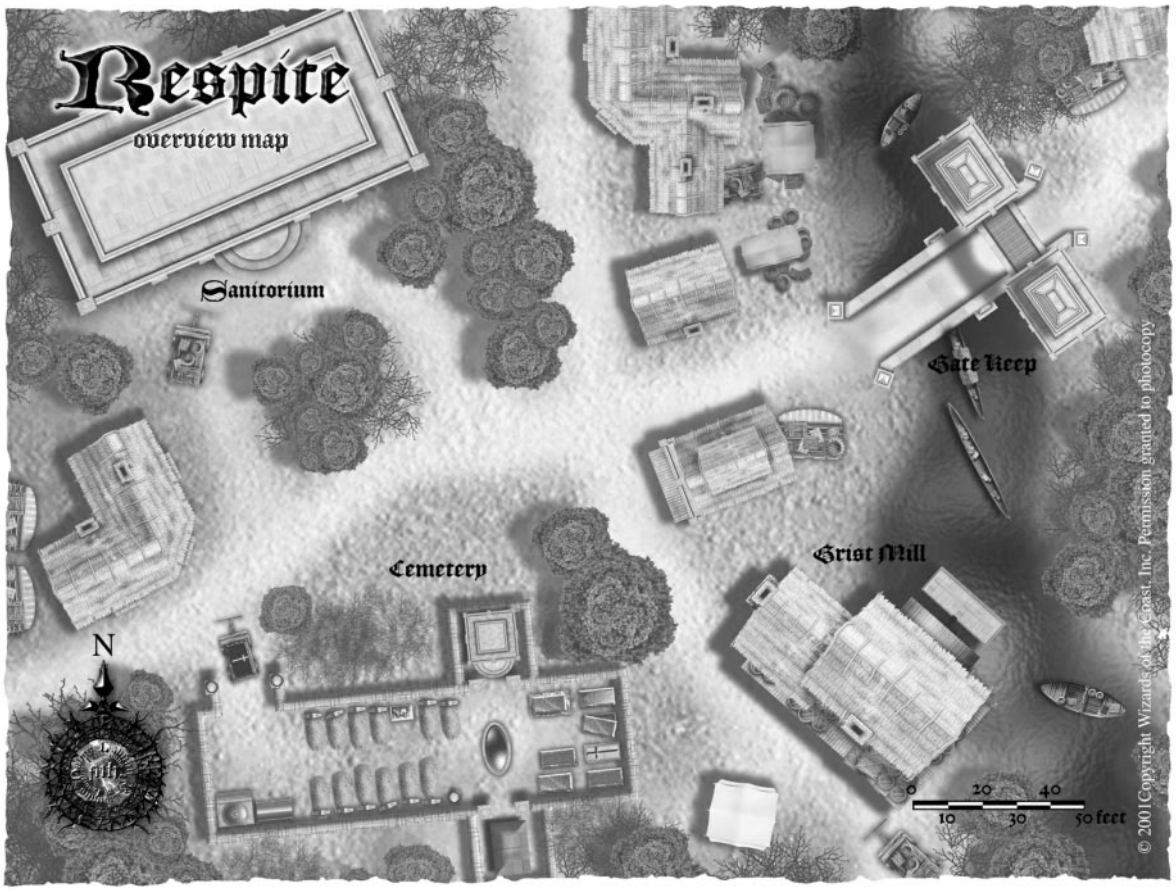
C. THE TOWN CENTER

PCs who stroll about Respite discover one or more of the following facts, depending on where they look.

- All over town there are incredibly lifelike statues of people. A successful Spot check (DC 15) reveals that all these statues are sitting or lying down, and that each has an expression of infinite weariness on its face rather than the terror or surprise that is common for victims of petrification.

RESTORING THE RESIDENTS

Though most creatures that are magically petrified can be restored with an appropriate spell, the people of Respite are beyond such aid. Their condition was not brought about instantaneously through a spell, but rather through a gradual loss of Constitution combined with slow calcification of the flesh. Thus, though any spell that would normally restore a petrified creature to normal (such as *break enchantment* or *transmute stone to flesh*) does convert a stone statue to flesh, the resulting creature is dead because its Constitution score is 0.



- Some houses also contain statues (generally sitting around a table or lying in beds), but others are empty. A successful Spot check (DC 15) reveals that the empty houses were not abandoned suddenly. Rather, the owners evidently packed up their belongings and left, planning never to return. A second successful Spot check (DC 25) reveals that all the animals, meats, leather, and anything else made of animal flesh or bone has also been turned to stone.
- Eight statues of gargoyles perch on top of the sanatorium. Any PC who has visited Respite before may attempt an Intelligence check (DC 10) to recall that there have never been any gargoyles there before.

D. GRIST MILL

The calcified remains of the miller are on the second floor of the grist mill. The statue that was his body is slumped across the table, its hand still gripping a quill. Next to him on the table are an inkwell and two small books—the mill's business log and the miller's personal journal.

The logbook reveals nothing of significance other than that business has been slow recently. The journal, however, contains the following information, which can be gained simply by reading it.

- The people of Respite have been getting sick recently with a mysterious disease. A victim of this malady first feels weak or faint, then turns to stone within a day.
- At first, the townsfolk suspected that the miller's new grindstone might be cursed, but the clerics confirmed that the stone was safe, so the true cause must lie elsewhere.
- The miller's theory was that the hot spring had been corrupted and its water poisoned.

E. OTHER BUILDINGS

The map of Respite shows only the town center. Additional cabins and farms dot the countryside to the north and west of the sanatorium. Characters who examine those buildings find that some contain calcified remains, but others are empty. Occasionally a petrified body can be found sitting on a bench or leaning against a tree.

As in the buildings at the center of town, the stone figures in these houses all look exhausted and weak. They are either sitting in chairs or lying on beds, but none of them seem to have been caught in the middle of any activity. None of their personal belongings appear to have been disturbed at all. (This is an isolated and relatively poor community, but you as DM may seed some of the houses with appropriate treasure or magic items if desired.)

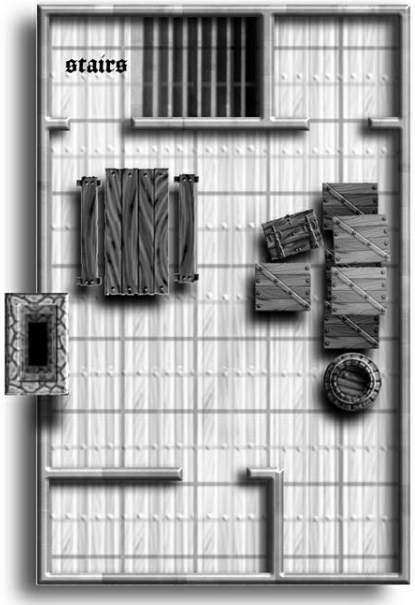
A PC entering any house containing a statue may attempt a Spot check (DC 25) to notice that the people are not the only things calcified. Animals, meats, leather, and anything else made of animal flesh or bone has also been turned to stone.

The empty houses have been abandoned, and the former residents evidently took all their belongings with them. The PCs can find little of interest or value in such homes, but they can use them as bases of operation if they wish.

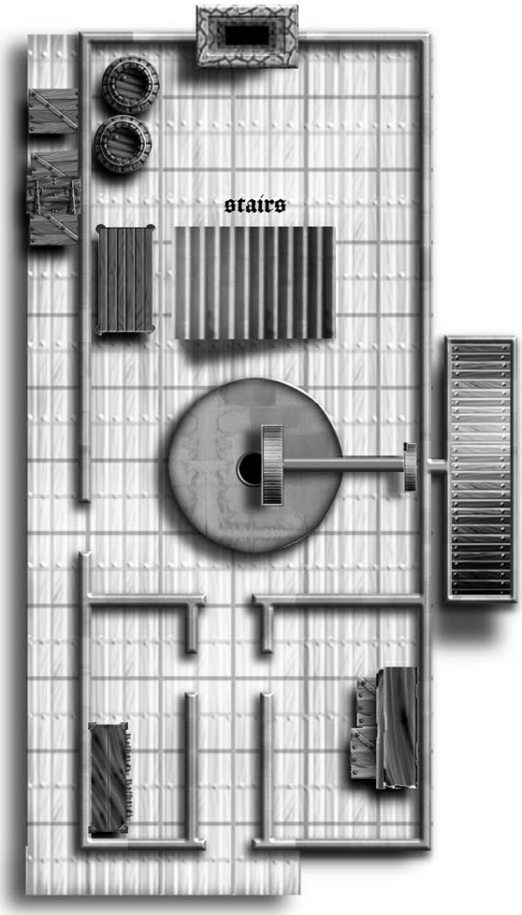
Overview Map

Haunted Grist Mill

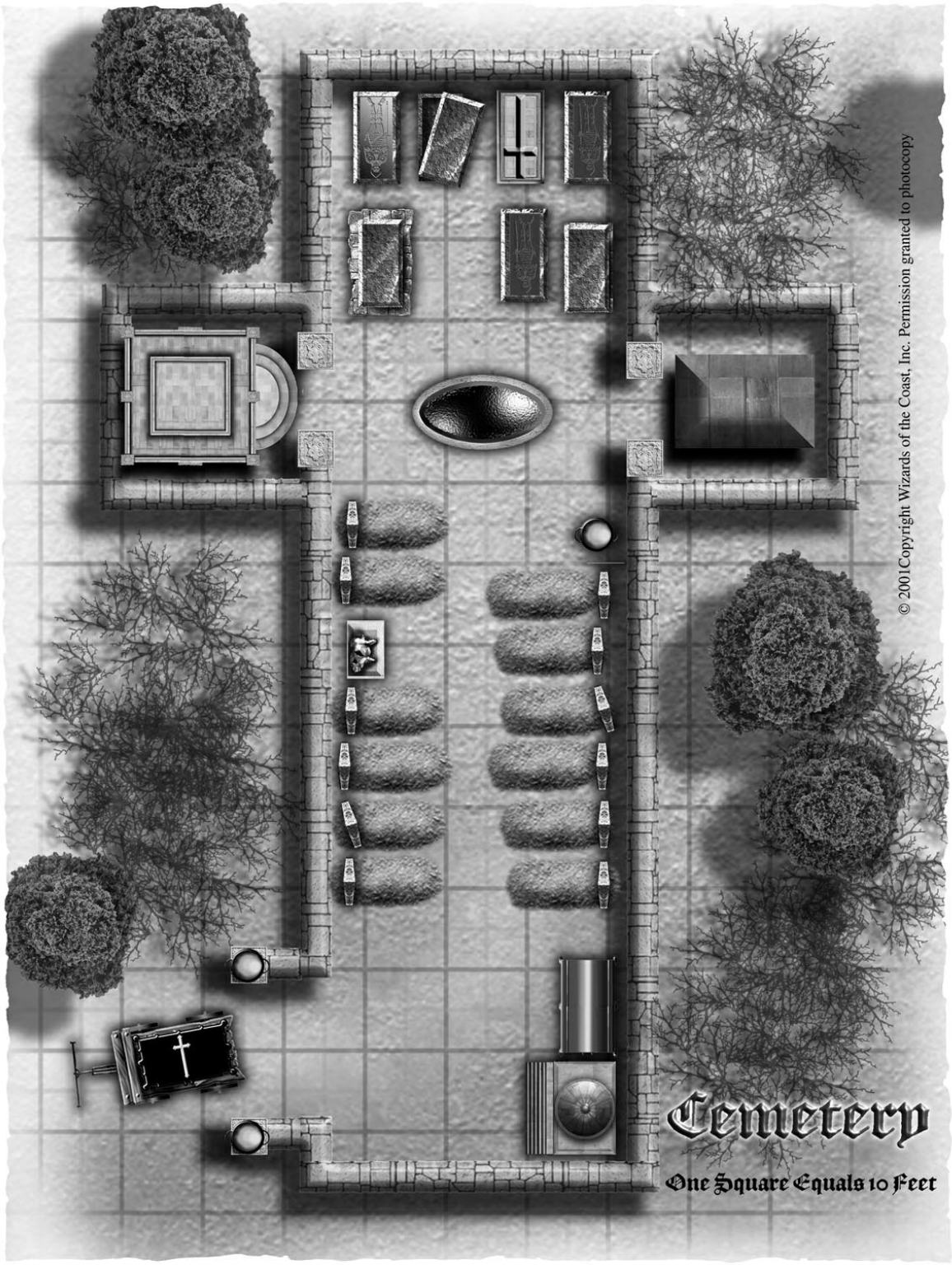
One Square Equals 5 Feet



Level Two



Level One


Cemetery
One Square Equals 10 Feet
© 2001Copyright Wizards of the Coast, Inc. Permission granted to photocopy

F. CEMETERY

Read or paraphrase the following aloud when the characters approach the town cemetery.

> Beyond a low stone wall lies a small cemetery. About two dozen stone sarcophagi rest on top of the ground in orderly rows, and two stone mausoleums complete the tranquil scene. There is no indication that anyone has been buried underground.

Continue with the following if the characters enter the cemetery and examine the crypts.

> The sarcophagi and mausoleums are covered with carvings of leaves, trees, and other icons of nature, and each is engraved with a name, a date of birth, a date of death, and a short epitaph. Both mausoleums purport to contain the remains of clerics of Obad-Hai. The sarcophagi seem to be the resting places of ordinary citizens.

None of the dates of death on the sarcophagi are especially recent.

This above-ground style of interment is a local necessity. The groundwater level fluctuates with the pressure in the hot spring. When the pressure and water level are high, large items (such as caskets) are expelled from the ground, sometimes in great eruptions. To avoid the trauma of having their dearly departed periodically vomited forth from the ground, the residents of Respite long ago developed the practice of placing their dead in above-ground stone coffins.

Opening a Sarcophagus

Opening any sarcophagus requires a successful Strength check (DC 20). Inside, the remains are calcified, just like everything else that was ever alive in Respite.

G. SANATORIUM

The sanatorium was the heart of the town of Respite. The clerics who managed the facility freely offered healing and restorative treatments to anyone who was in need, although donations to aid in their good works were always encouraged.

> The building before you is two stories tall, with a facade of carved marble. A semicircle of stairs leads up to the front door, which is framed by tall columns decorated with carvings of ivy vines, birds, squirrels, and other natural creatures.
>
> The roof has six gables along the front face of the building, plus one more on each side. Atop each gable sits the statue of a monstrous gargoyle, casting its stony gaze over the courtyard below.

G1. Courtyard (EL 16)

Like the gargoyles on the gate keep, these are creatures rather than statues. Krekulphyr has ordered them to guard the sanatorium. They are to sit motionless and watch visitors' actions, but not attack except in self-defense or to prevent anyone from entering the sanatorium. If they do get into a fight, they are to kill the interlopers and throw their bodies into the river. Furthermore, they are instructed not to interfere with any goings-on at the gate keep.

Gargoyle Sentries (4): Male and female gargoyle Fighter 6; CR 10; Medium-size magical beast (earth); HD 4d10+16 plus 6d10+24; hp 95; Init +2; Spd 45 ft., fly 75 ft. (average); AC 20, touch 16, flat-footed 18; Atk +13 melee (1d4+3, 2 claws) and +11 melee (1d6+1, bite) and +11 melee (1d6+1, gore), or +16/+11 melee (1d8+7/19–20, +3 *longsword*) and +11 melee (1d6+1, bite) and +11 melee (1d6+1, gore); SQ damage reduction 15/+1, darkvision 60 ft., freeze, low-light vision; AL CE; SV Fort +13, Ref +8, Will +3; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 18, Int 6, Wis 11, Cha 7.

Skills and Feats: Climb +5, Hide +9*, Listen +5, Spot +10; Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Flyby Attack, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Multiattack, Power Attack, Weapon Finesse (claw), Weapon Finesse (bite), Weapon Finesse (gore).

Freeze (Ex): A gargoyle sentry can hold itself so still it appears to be a statue. An observer must succeed on a Spot check (DC 20) to notice that the gargoyle is really alive.

Skills: *A gargoyle receives a +8 racial bonus on Hide checks when concealed against a background of worked stone.

Possessions: *+3 longsword, belt of giant strength +4, ring of protection +4, eyes of the eagle, bead of force.*

Gargoyle Sentries (4): Male and female gargoyle Rogue 6; CR 10; Medium-size magical beast (earth); HD 4d10+16 plus 6d6+24; hp 83; Init +4; Spd 45 ft., fly 75 ft. (average); AC 22, touch 18, flat-footed 22; Atk +12 melee (1d4+1, 2 claws) and +10 melee (1d6, bite) and +10 melee (1d6, gore), or +11/+6 melee (1d6+3/19–20, +2 *ghost touch short sword*) and +10 melee (1d6, bite) and +10 melee (1d6, gore); SA sneak attack +3d6; SQ damage reduction 15/+1, darkvision 60 ft.,

evasion, freeze, low-light vision, traps, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC, can't be flanked); AL CE; SV Fort +10, Ref +13, Will +3; Str 12, Dex 18, Con 18, Int 6, Wis 11, Cha 7.

Skills and Feats: Hide +17*, Listen +13, Move Silently +16, Spot +13; Combat Reflexes, Flyby Attack, Multiattack, Weapon Finesse (claw), Weapon Finesse (bite), Weapon Finesse (gore).

Evasion (Ex): If exposed to any effect that normally allows a character to attempt a Reflex saving throw for half damage, a gargoyle sentry takes no damage with a successful saving throw.

Freeze (Ex): A gargoyle sentry can hold itself so still it appears to be a statue. An observer must succeed on a Spot check (DC 20) to notice that the gargoyle is really alive.

Skills: *A gargoyle receives a +8 racial bonus on Hide checks when concealed against a background of worked stone.

Possessions: *+2 ghost touch longsword, belt of Dexterity +4, ring of protection +4, dust of disappearance, bead of force.*

Tactics: When attacking, the gargoyles work as a well-trained team. The fighters fly down and engage the PCs in melee combat, while the rogues sprinkle themselves with *dust of disappearance* and take to the air. The invisible gargoyles make flyby attacks against their foes, hopefully gaining sneak attack bonuses as they do so. The gargoyles try to grapple any PCs who attempt to run into the sanatorium.

The gargoyles fear Krekulphyr more than they do death, so they fight to the bitter end.

G2. First Floor

The first floor of the sanatorium is where the clerics of Obad-Hai met and entertained their visitors, and where the head of the facility performed the mundane business of keeping the place running. The rooms (in any arrangement you prefer) are: dining room, meeting room, kitchen, storeroom, and the head cleric's office.

The gargoyles have left the dining room and meeting room completely untouched, but they have ransacked the kitchen and storeroom for every scrap of food available. As with everywhere else in town, all the meat and other animal products in the sanatorium have been calcified.

The petrified head cleric still sits behind his desk, slumped over in an exhausted posture. On the desk in front of him is his diary, still open to the final entry. The writing is wobbly, as though the man wrote it with his last ounce of life. Any character who reads the diary gains the following information (no check required).

- The clerics tried to cast restorative spells on the townsfolk, but they didn't work. At best, such an application of magic restored a statue to its fleshy state, but the person was dead.
- At first the head cleric suspected that this effect was a disease of some sort, but he had a vision that the death god Nerull was somehow involved after a gargoyle arrived and perched on the sanatorium.

G3. Second Floor

The second floor of the sanatorium is where the clerics treated visitors who needed healing. Several of the rooms have padded tables that can be used to administer massage, acupressure, or herbal treatments, or even simply to sleep. Other rooms contain cages that were used to confine animals brought in to receive healing.

Most rooms have drains set in the floors because the clerics employed mineral water from the hot spring in a great many of their ministrations. The drains lead to outlets at the rear of the sanatorium. The rooms on the north end of the building were used as baths. Any customer desiring a nice, long soak could order a tub to be brought in and filled with mineral water from the hot spring.

G4. Basement

The sanatorium's basement consists mostly of cold storage spaces—chambers in which the clerics kept supplies of dried meats, preserved fruits, linens, blankets, and other goods. There is nothing of special interest here, but any mundane items that the PCs need are likely to be available.

A door in the western wall of the basement leads into a natural cavern that the clerics referred to as the catacombs.

G5. Catacombs (EL 18)

The placement of the sanatorium next to a sizeable natural cave was a happy accident. Rather than just walling over the connection between the cave and the basement, the clerics decided to retain it and use the cavern for additional storage when needed. The cave also provided an ideal way to track the rise and fall of the water level in the spring: When the catacomb floor was damp, the water level was especially high.

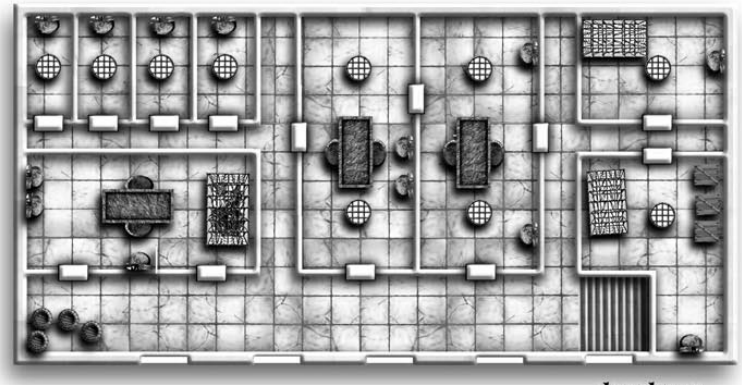
Once a few racks of wine and barrels of ale were stored here, but the gargoyles drank what they wanted and smashed the rest. Now the catacombs serve as

Sanitorium

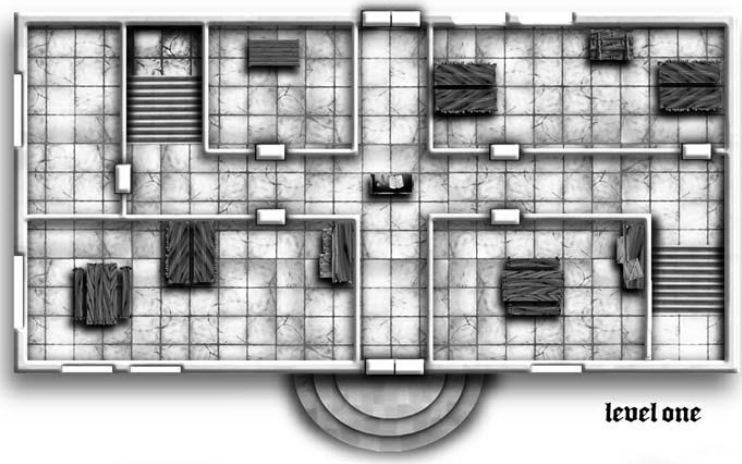
One Square Equals 5 Feet

Key

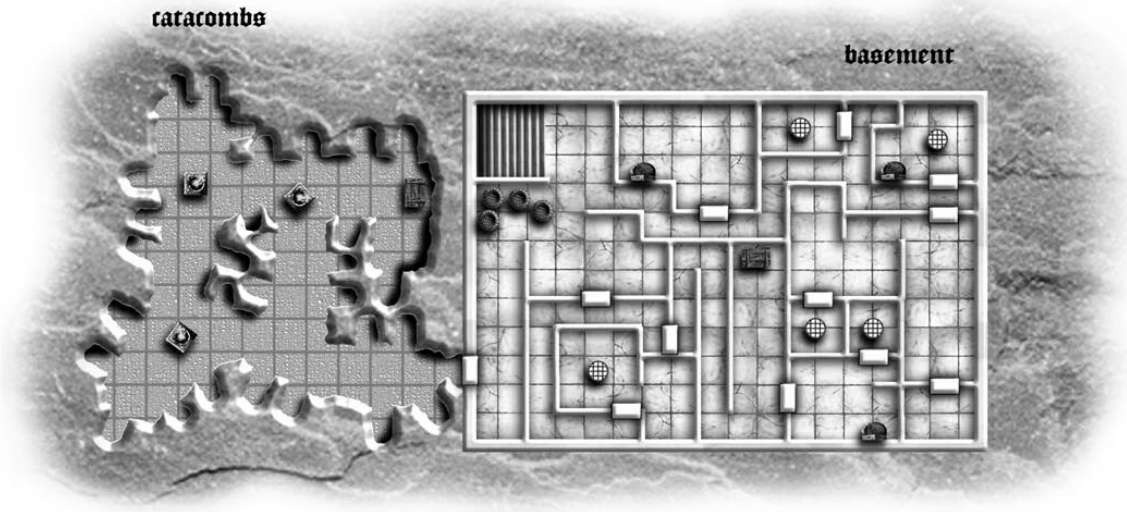
- surgical table
- lab animal cage
- drain
- brazier
- stairs
- lab rinse basin



level two



level one



© 2001Copyright Wizards of the Coast, Inc. Permission granted to photocopy

Krekulphyr's personal sanctum. He has built a shrine to Nerull here and spends many hours a day praying to his dark god and admiring their joint creation—the deathstone.

How the room appears when the PCs arrive depends entirely on their actions up to this point. If any fighting took place in the courtyard, Krekulphyr did not hear it, since outside sounds do not carry into the catacombs. But he is entitled to a Listen check (DC 25) to notice the sounds of fighting inside the sanatorium. If the PCs make any great amount of noise while in the basement, Krekulphyr may attempt another Listen check (DC 20) to hear it.

If he succeeds on either of the above checks, Krekulphyr orders the deathstone to stand 10 feet from the door and attack anyone who steps through it into the room. Meanwhile, he casts *bull's strength* on himself, draws his mace, and hides against the cave wall, preparing to strike down anyone who gets past his construct.

If the PCs manage to enter the catacombs without alerting Krekulphyr, they catch the evil cleric unawares. Read aloud or paraphrase the following in that case.

> Within this natural cavern, a small brazier sheds a dim, flickering light. Though poor, the illumination is sufficient to reveal two figures. A burly humanoid wearing a hooded cloak kneels before a small shrine, chanting softly in a deep, gravelly voice. The other figure resembles a 9-foot-tall, humanoid skeleton that is either made of stone or completely covered in it. The stone skeleton stands completely motionless and may even be a statue—it is difficult to tell for sure in this light.

Creatures: Krekulphyr kneels in front of the shrine, offering a prayer of thanks to Nerull for his assistance in creating the deathstone. The gargoyle cleric pledges to use the creature to further his dark god's aims. The gigantic skeleton figure is the deathstone itself—an unholy melding of a stone golem and a hapless gravecrawler.

Krekulphyr: Male gargoyle Cleric 10 of Nerull; CR 14; Medium-size magical beast (earth); HD 4d10+16 plus 10d8+40; hp 123; Init +2; Spd 45 ft., fly 75 ft. (average); AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16; Atk +13 melee (1d4+2, 2 claws) and +11 melee (1d6+1, bite) and +11 melee (1d6+1, gore), or +17/+12/+7 melee (1d8+7, *+4 unholy heavy mace*) and +11 melee (1d6+1, bite) and +11 melee (1d6+1, gore); SA rebuke undead 3/day; SQ damage reduction 15/+1, darkvision 60 ft., freeze, low-light vision; AL CE; SV Fort +21, Ref +9, Will +11; Str 15, Dex 14, Con 18, Int 6, Wis 16, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +14, Hide +9*, Listen +7, Spot +7; Cleave, Combat Casting, Multiattack, Power Attack, Weapon Finesse (claw), Weapon Finesse (bite), Weapon Finesse (gore).

Freeze (Ex): Krekulphyr can hold himself so still he appears to be a statue. An observer must succeed on a Spot check (DC 20) to notice that he is really alive.

Skills: *Krekulphyr receives a +8 racial bonus on Hide checks when concealed against a background of worked stone.

Cleric Spells Prepared (6/6/6/5/4/3; save DC 13 + spell level): 0—*cure minor wounds, guidance, light, mending, resistance, virtue;* 1st—*bane, cause fear*, divine favor, doom, entropic shield, obscuring mist;* 2nd—*bull's strength, death knell*, hold person* (2), *resist elements, sound burst;* 3rd—*blindness/deafness, magic circle against good*, prayer, searing light* (2); 4th—*death ward*, dismissal, divine power, spell immunity;* 5th—*circle of doom, slay living*, unhallow.*

*Domain spell. Deity: Nerull. Domains: Death (death touch 1/day), Evil (cast evil spells at +1 caster level).

Possessions: *+4 unholy heavy mace, belt of giant strength +4, periapt of wisdom +4, cloak of Charisma +2, bracers of armor +2, pearl of power* (3rd level), *Nivean talisman +6* (see below), divine scroll of *dispel magic, flame strike,* and *transmute mud to rock.*

Deathstone: CR 16; Large construct; HD 14d10; hp 77; Init –1; Spd 20 ft. (can't run); AC 26, touch 8, flat-footed 26; Atk +18 melee (2d10+9, 2 slams); SA calcifying aura, slow; SQ construct traits, darkvision 60 ft., magic immunity, SR 30, tremorsense, turn resistance 6; AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +4; Str 29, Dex 9, Con –, Int –, Wis 11, Cha 1.

Skills and Feats: Alertness, Blind-Fight.

Calcifying Aura (Su): The presence of a deathstone is enough to cause flesh (living or dead) to harden and calcify, turning slowly into stone. This effect is a 30-foot-radius emanation centered on the deathstone, and it is always active. Every creature within the area must make a Fortitude save (DC 22) each round or take 1d2 points of Constitution damage. Lost Constitution is restored at a rate of 1 point per day. A character brought to a Constitution score of 0 in the manner turns completely to stone and is dead. The deathstone is immune to its own calcifying aura and to those of other deathstones and gravecrawlers.

Slow (Su): A deathstone can produce an effect identical to that of the *slow* spell as a free action once

every 2 rounds. The effect has a range of 10 feet and a duration of 7 rounds. A target must make a successful Will save (DC 13) to negate the effect. This ability otherwise functions the same as the spell.

Construct Traits: A deathstone is immune to mind-affecting effects (charms, compulsions, phantasms, patterns, and morale effects), and to poison, *sleep,* paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, necromantic effects, and any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects or is harmless. A deathstone cannot heal damage and it is not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, ability drain, or energy drain. It is not at risk of death from massive damage but is destroyed when reduced to 0 or fewer hit points. It cannot be raised or resurrected.

Magic Immunity (Ex): A deathstone is immune to all spells, spell-like abilities, and supernatural effects, except as follows. A *transmute rock to mud* spell slows it (as the *slow* spell) for 2d6 rounds, with no saving throw, while *transmute mud to rock* heals all of its lost hit points. A *stone to flesh* spell does not actually change the deathstone's structure, but it makes the creature vulnerable to any normal attack for the following round. (This vulnerability does not include spells, except those that cause damage.)

Tremorsense (Ex): A deathstone can automatically sense the location of any creature or object within 60 feet that is in contact with the ground.

Tactics: The deathstone stands guard silently, though its calcifying aura can affect any creatures that move within range. Should any of the PCs move into one of its threatened squares, it attacks immediately. The noise of battle alerts Krekulphyr, who immediately joins the battle.

Drunk with the power of Nerull, Krekulphyr tosses spells around with abandon. With the deathstone at his side, he believes he is invincible. Only if the battle starts to turn against him does he begin to apply any strategy.

If the deathstone is reduced to 0 hp, its golem portion collapses into a heap of rubble, releasing the gravecrawler. The undead creature is helpless for 1 round after its release, but thereafter it can take any actions it deems appropriate. Although the gravecrawler has no interest in fighting the PCs, it readily defends itself if attacked. Once it has taken one-half of its total hit points in damage, it flees into the ground and disappears.

Male Gravecrawler (if freed): CR 16; Small undead (earth); HD 25d12; hp 162; Init +2; Spd 20 ft., burrow 20 ft.; AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 15; Atk +13 melee (1d4/19–20 plus 1d4 Con drain, bite); SA calcifying aura, Constitution drain 1d4; SQ burrow, darkvision 60 ft., speak with dead, spell resistance 30, tremorsense, turn resistance +6, undead traits; AL N; SV Fort +8, Ref +10, Will +16; Str 10, Dex 15, Con –, Int 16, Wis 11, Cha 11.

Skills and Feats: Balance +4, Bluff +5, Diplomacy +12, Escape Artist +10, Hide +21, Intimidate +2, Jump +2, Knowledge (history) +20, Knowledge (local) +20, Knowledge (undead) +20, Listen +7, Sense Motive +5, Spot +2, Tumble +7; Alertness, Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Critical (bite), Iron Will, Mobility, Skill Focus (Knowledge [history]), Skill Focus (Knowledge [local]), Skill Focus (Knowledge [undead]).

Calcifying Aura (Su): The presence of a gravecrawler is enough to cause flesh (living or dead) to harden and calcify, turning slowly into stone. This effect is a 30-foot-radius emanation centered on the gravecrawler, and it is always active. Every creature within the area must make a Fortitude save (DC 22) each round or take 1d2 points of Constitution damage. Lost Constitution is restored at a rate of 1 point per day. A character brought to a Constitution score of 0 in the manner turns completely to stone and is dead. The gravecrawler is immune to its own calcifying aura and to those of other gravecrawlers and deathstones.

Constitution Drain (Su): Any creature bitten by a gravecrawler must make a Fortitude save (DC 22) or permanently lose 1d4 points of Constitution (or twice that amount on a critical hit). The gravecrawler heals 5 points of damage (or 10 on a critical hit) whenever it drains Constitution, gaining any excess as temporary hit points. A creature affected by this Constitution drain finds parts of its flesh turned to hard, brittle stone. At 0 Constitution, the target becomes a stone statue. A gravecrawler is immune to its own Constitution drain and to those of others of its kind.

Burrow (Ex): Gravecrawlers can move through stone, dirt, and earth, leaving no indication of their passage. A *move earth* spell cast on an area containing a burrowing gravecrawler flings the creature back 30 feet and stuns it for 1 round, unless it succeeds on a Fortitude save (DC 22).

Speak with Dead (Su): At will, a gravecrawler can produce an effect like that of a *speak with dead* spell (caster level 20th), except that it can be used to communicate with only one corpse per week. This ability does not allow communication with calcified remains.

Tremorsense (Ex): A gravecrawler can automatically sense the location of anything within 60 feet that is in contact with the ground.

Turn Resistance (Ex): A gravecrawler is treated as an undead with 31 Hit Dice for the purpose of turn, rebuke, command, and bolster attempts.

Undead Traits: A gravecrawler is immune to mind-affecting effects, poison, *sleep*, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, necromantic effects, and any effect requiring a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects or is harmless. It is not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, ability drain, energy drain, or death from massive damage. A gravecrawler cannot be raised, and resurrection works only if it is willing.

Development: The gravecrawler is an intelligent monster, and it is more than happy to talk with the PCs if given the chance. It retains the memory of everything that happened while it was part of the symbiotic construct and before. If engaged in conversation, the gravecrawler explains that it came to Respite through a twist of fate and bore no ill will toward the inhabitants. In fact, it would have liked to become a part of their community. (Gravecrawlers are sometimes known as ancestor worms and held in high esteem by intelligent creatures in search of knowledge; see Gravecrawler in *Monster Manual II* for details.) But when Krekulphyr came to town, he commanded the gravecrawler to do terrible things against its will. The creature wishes it could make up for all the death and sorrow it has caused, but that is obviously impossible.

The gravecrawler has had enough of the town of Respite. If it survives its encounter with the PCs, it bids them farewell and uses its burrow ability to pass straight into the ground, leaving the area forever.

CONTINUING THE ADVENTURE

Even after the PCs have defeated Krekulphyr and his minions, the town of Respite remains ruined. All the townsfolk have either died or fled to new homes, and the once-popular resort seems doomed to become a ghost town.

Still, there is nothing actually wrong with the town now that the gravecrawler and the gargoyles are gone, and the hot spring is still an appealing local phenomenon. If the PCs can convince new commoners to move into town, Respite would very quickly return to its former state. Alternatively, PCs with the requisite spellcasting power could raise several of the key figures in town (the head cleric of Obad-Hai and the miller, for example) and let them go about the business of getting Respite back to normal. In circumstances such as these, the town would make an interesting base of operations for the heroes, who would be treated like kings from that day on.

NEW MONSTER: DEATHSTONE

Large Construct
Hit Dice: 14d10 (77 hp)
Initiative: –1
Speed: 20 ft.(can't run)
AC: 26 (–1 size, –1 Dex, +18 natural), touch 8, flat-footed 26
Attacks: 2 slams +18 melee
Damage: Slam 2d10+9
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks: Calcifying aura, slow
Special Qualities: Construct traits, damage reduction 30/+2, magic immunity, tremorsense
Saves: Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +4
Abilities: Str 29, Dex 9, Con —, Int —, Wis 11, Cha 1
Feats: Alertness[B], Blind-Fight[B]

Climate/Terrain: Any land
Organization: Solitary
Challenge Rating: 16
Treasure: None
Alignment: Always neutral
Advancement: 15–21 (Large); 22–42 (Huge)

A deathstone results from the magical melding of a stone golem and a gravecrawler. It can be created only by a cleric of Nerull and only with the dark god's direct aid.

Although the deathstone exists as a single creature, the gravecrawler is whole and captive within its form. In most respects, the construct functions exactly the same as a stone golem, but it also has access to some of the gravecrawler's more dangerous abilities (namely its calcifying aura and tremorsense).

COMBAT

A deathstone fights by slamming opponents with its massive fists, just like a stone golem does. It attacks the creatures its master orders it to fight. In the absence of orders, it merely defends itself.

Calcifying Aura (Su): The presence of a deathstone is enough to cause flesh (living or dead) to harden and calcify, turning slowly into stone. This effect is a 30-foot-radius emanation centered on the deathstone, and it is always active. Every creature

within the area must make a Fortitude save (DC 22) each round or take 1d2 points of Constitution damage. Lost Constitution is restored at a rate of 1 point per day. A character brought to a Constitution score of 0 in the manner turns completely to stone and is dead. The deathstone is immune to its own calcifying aura and to those of other deathstones and gravecrawlers.

Slow (Su): A deathstone can produce an effect identical to that of the *slow* spell as a free action once every 2 rounds. The effect has a range of 10 feet and a duration of 7 rounds. A target must make a successful Will save (DC 13) to negate the effect. This ability otherwise functions the same as the spell.

Construct Traits: A deathstone is immune to mind-affecting effects (charms, compulsions, phantasms, patterns, and morale effects), and to poison, *sleep*, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, necromantic effects, and any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects or is harmless. A deathstone cannot heal damage and it is not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, ability drain, or energy drain. It is not at risk of death from massive damage but is destroyed when reduced to 0 or fewer hit points. It cannot be raised or resurrected.

Magic Immunity (Ex): A deathstone is immune to all spells, spell-like abilities, and supernatural effects, except as follows. A *transmute rock to mud* spell slows it (as the *slow* spell) for 2d6 rounds, with no saving throw, while *transmute mud to rock* heals all of its lost hit points. A *stone to flesh* spell does not actually change the deathstone's structure, but it makes the creature vulnerable to any normal attack for the following round. (This vulnerability does not include spells, except those that cause damage.)

Tremorsense (Ex): A deathstone can automatically sense the location of any creature or object within 60 feet that is in contact with the ground.

NEW MAGIC ITEM

The Nivean talisman was developed to protect creatures against effects such as petrification and calcification.

NIVEAN TALISMAN

This item appears to be a small hunk of granite wrapped in a lattice of human hair. Its wearer gains a +6 luck bonus on all Fortitude saves made to resist petrification or calcification.

Caster Level: 15th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *aid*; *Market Price:* 9,000; *Weight:* —.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Stan! has been publishing fiction, cartoons, and games professionally since 1982. He has served as a graphic designer and line editor for West End Games, an editor and designer for TSR, Inc., and an author, senior designer, and creative director for Wizards of the Coast, Inc. Currently, Stan! is the Creative Vice President of The Game Mechanics, Inc. <www.thegamemechanics.com>. His recent projects include *Urban Arcana* from Wizards of the Coast and the *Modern Player's Companion* from The Game Mechanics.

Stan! lives in Renton, WA, where he eats nothing but meat and cheese. Visit him online at <www.stannex.com>.